

Welcome

We're glad you're here! Thank you for joining us today. Members of this congregation have been gathering here to worship since 1804, when our church was formed to minister to the Native American and European settlers in Athens. Over the past two centuries our congregation has changed, but our mission remains the same: to make disciples of Jesus Christ. We are inspired by the words of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, who encouraged believers to "do all the good you can, in all the ways you can." At Athens First United Methodist, there are many ways to get involved, grow in your faith, and do good in our community.

If you are unable to attend worship in person, each Sunday our 11:00 a.m. service is broadcast on WRFC 960 AM, and all of our services are live-streamed on our website at *athensfirstumc*. *org/webcast*.

Nursery

Our nursery is available for infants through four-year-olds on Sundays from 8:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. The nursery area is located on the first floor of the building, off the Washington Street entrance.

Children

Worship activity bags (age appropriate for all preschool and elementary children) are available every Sunday in the narthex and by the south entrance of the sanctuary. Children's Church is held for children in kindergarten through second grade and follows the Children's Message during 11:00 a.m. worship all Sundays except for Communion Sundays.

Sunday School

We offer Sunday School for all ages, kindergarten through adult, each Sunday from 9:45–10:45 a.m. For a list of adult Sunday School classes and locations, visit *athensfirstumc.org/ adultsundayschool*.

Connect

We are blessed to have a large congregation. Because of this, we offer many programs and ministries. It can be overwhelming trying to decide where to get involved. If you would like a buddy to guide you along this process, please notify a Helper. Helpers serve as part of our Welcome Ministry team. Look for them in the narthex or near the altar. You can also contact a Helper through our website *athensfirstumc.org/helper*.

Another great way to learn about the life of our church is through attending a Newcomer Orientation held every second Sunday of the month at 9:45 and 11 a.m. We also encourage you to visit our website, *athensfirstumc.org*, for information about our ministries, to register for events, and to listen to sermons from our sermon archive. Visit *athensfirstumc.org/thesteeple* to sign up for our weekly newsletter, the eSteeple. You can also connect with us via social media. Find us @athens_firstumc on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest.

Our church office is open Monday through Friday, from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. If you need assistance, please call 706-543-1442.

The Worship of God

*Please stand as you are able. The congregation speaks or sings the text in **bold type**.

Gathering

The flowers on the altar today are given to the glory of God and in loving tribute to all mothers by the Altar Guild. THE PRELUDE "Fairest Lord Jesus" | Page

THE WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER Beth Dickinson

Praise & Thanksgiving

* THE PROCESSIONAL HYMN 61 "Come, Thou Almighty King" | ITALIAN HYMN

*** THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

We believe in God the Father, who created the world, was faithful when we were not, and who continuously seeks to redeem the world.

We believe in Jesus Christ, who humbled himself by becoming human and moving into our neighborhood; was sent by the Father to give us life; embodied and taught the righteous love of God; and who, though he knew no sin, became sin and was put to death on a cross.

We believe that three days later, Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by the power of God; was seen in bodily form by his disciples.

We believe that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus give us victory over any form of sin and brokenness and allow us to know the full love of God for the world.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, who actively works in our lives, giving us grace to be like Jesus, and sends us to show God's love to the world. Amen.

* THE GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

* THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER Betsy Butler

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

THE RECOGNITION OF THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2015 11:00 a.m.

THE CHILDREN'S MESSAGE | 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

At the 11:00 a.m. service, children in kindergarten through second grade will go to the Children's Church in the children's area on the third floor. Parents are to pick up children at the end of the service.

Proclamation of the Word

THE OFFERING

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM

8:30 a.m. "Amazing Grace" | Jean Anne Shafferman Sung by Callie, Mary Carroll, and Claire Waller

9:45 a.m. "A Good Work" | Miller

Sung by the Wesleyan Youth Choir; Seul-ki Kim, accompanist

May the one who began a good work be faithful to complete it in you. I thank God every time I remember you! I thank God every time I remember you, constantly praying for you. May the one who began a good work be faithful to complete it in you.

11:00 a.m. "Living God's Love" | Patterson

Sung by the Celebrate Choir and their family members; Sylvia Arant, accompanist Based on Colossians 3:12-17

May the word of Christ dwell richly in you as you teach one another with wisdom and with love, giving thanks to God in all that you do: in the psalms of praise, in the hymns of faith, and the songs of the spirit too: May the word of Christ dwell richly in you. For you are the people chosen by God to live a life of compassion and kindness to all: Working together, helping each other, living God's love.

* THE DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow! Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia!

THE SCRIPTURE READING

JEREMIAH 17:7-8

Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit.

THE ANTHEM | 11:00 a.m.

The anthem "A Good Work" has been placed in the choir library to the glory of God, and in honor of Tina Anderson, and in memory of Sandra Hightower, by Jon, Holly, Matthew, Baylor, and Isaac Ward. "A Good Work" | Miller Sung by the Wesleyan Youth Choir; Seul-ki Kim, accompanist May the one who began a good work be faithful to complete it in you. I thank God every time I remember you! I thank God every time I remember you, constantly praying for you. May the one who began a good work be faithful to complete it in you.

THE SERMON "The Relentless Pursuit" | Chuck Hodges

Response to the Word

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION | 8:30 a.m.

Please turn to page 9 in our hymnal. At Athens First United Methodist Church, all are invited to commune at Christ's table. If you need to be served in your pew, please call this to the attention of an usher. Gluten-free communion elements are available at the center station with the acolytes.

Sending Forth

*THE HYMN | TFWS 2197 "Lord of All Hopefulness" | SLANE

* THE BLESSING

* THE CHORAL RESPONSE

"We Receive Your Blessing"

We receive your blessing, we receive your grace as we walk in the light shining from your face. May the peace that you give change the way that we live. We receive your blessing as we leave this place.

* THE POSTLUDE

"All Things Bright and Beautiful" | Traditional

Sermon Notes

MAY USHERS

8:30 a.m. Jim Belger, Ann and Paul Brown, Larry Deal, Hugh Larkey, Mack Lowrey, Jim Lyons, Candler Meadors, Olan Moore, Bob Noble, Grace Rabek, Ken Reece, Keith Wilson, Michael and Sharon Broun

9:45 a.m. Chris Bostdorff, Tom Cooper, David and Jane Disney, Mark Ellison, Mark Firth, Tom Hedges, Dan Lasseter, Jim Lyons, Sharon Milton, Tom Milton, Al Rogers, Bill Trigleth, Michelle and Reeves McNeill
11:00 a.m. Lee Brinson, Nathan King, Ryan Brinson, Claude Felton, Steve Greer, Mack Furlow, John Bateman, Jim Lyons

OFFERING STEWARDS

Bob Booth, Charlie Grimes, Jim Lyons, Nat Carmack, Henry Garrard, Nathan King, Al Hawley, Sean Rogers, Charlie Upchurch III

GREETERS

Ben Butler, Bo Griffith, Bo Allen

FIRST LIGHT ACOLYTES

8:30 a.m. Evan Williams, Lauren Griffith, Sammy Hodges
9:45 a.m John Curtis Pruett, Elijah Bullock, Cole Reynolds, Isaac Ward
11:00 a.m. Walt Chapeau, John Cunningham, Mary Martin Harper

ATTENDANCE ON MAY 3

Total Worship | 1,086 Sunday School | 449

8:30 a.m. | 232 9:45 a.m. | 332 11:00 a.m. | 437 Online | 85

FINANCIAL REPORT

Budget for 2015 | \$2,641,842 Amount Given YTD | \$1,011,386 Goal for April| \$204,201 Amount after 4 Sundays | \$198,645

OUR MINISTERS AND PROGRAM DIRECTORS

Chuck Hodges Senior Minister athensfirstumc.org chuck@athensfirstumc.org | 706-206-5529

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The Steeple

Congratulations to all of our High School Seniors

Aidan Alexander Black Hannah Elaine Bostdorff Madison Elizabeth Bostdorff Deanna Elizabeth Buchanan Robert Benjamin Butler Mary Baker Carter Sarah Ellen Carter Maria Fernanda Clark James Lewis Clarke Zachary Noah Cobb Mary Caroline Colley Mark Curry Cross Morgan McNeilly Grace Lauren Rhea Griffith Samantha Lea Harvel Cameron Tate Hedges Laura Kathryn Hollingsworth John David Hubbard John Hayden Hudson Katie Nichole Jacobsen

Kathryn Virginia Johnson Mason Thomas Jones Thomas Joseph Jordan Jackson Elliott Keene Raleigh Albert Lumpkin Anna Alyssa McKoy Emma Kathryn Meeks Madeline Lydia Murphey Sutton Brownsey Norris Erik Morgan Norstedt Eliza McCall Petersen Hunter Ashley Raye Roby West Redwine Caroline Dean Robinson Michael Duncan Sligh Garett Mitchell Walker Alexander Hill Waugh Joshua Gerald Whalen **Bailey Wilson** Carlton Charles Winstead

Special thanks to our grade level sponsors: Torey & Randy Keene and Cindy & David McKoy



New Arrivals

Congratulations to Wendy and Jeff Greer on the birth of their son, William Stowe, on April 30. William is the grandson of Susan and Steve Greer.

In Sympathy

Heartfelt Christian sympathy is extended to Anna Bozman, Pat and Jim Bozman, Joanne Meadors, and Candler Meadors in the loss of Anna's son Lake on May 1.

Heartfelt Christian sympathy is extended to Tom Collins and family in the loss of his brother, Dr. James Collins, Jr., on May 3.

Newcomer Orientation

Newcomer Orientation | Today

Everyone is invited to attend Newcomer Orientation today in the Hospitality Suite (on the Adult Sunday School hallway). Two sessions are offered, 9:45 and 11:00 a.m. You can learn more about Athens First United Methodist, including ways to get involved and how to become a member.

Learn more | athensfirstumc.org/newcomerorientation Martha Aenchbacher | martha@athensfirstumc.org 706-543-1442

Thank you! | Great Day Of Service and Celebration Brunch

May 2-3 was a great weekend at AFUMC! More than 130 volunteers came together to serve at the Great Day Of Service. Teams worked together on various projects with our mission partners. The theme for our service day was

"Love builds homes!" Thank you to the many hands and feet that shared the love of Christ throughout our church and our community.

One of our service projects included preparation for Sunday's Celebration Brunch and Basket Auction. It truly was a morning of celebration. We are grateful to everyone for your participation. The delicious menu prepared by members of our church was served in a transformed Hancock Hall. Ticket sales combined with the beautiful Basket Auction raised over \$9,000 for local missions. It was great to come together as a church family to serve our neighbors. We're already looking forward to next year!



Freeway | May 20

Freeway: A Way to be Free is an eight-week coed experience that is built upon God's amazing grace, conversations with friends, and a personal exploration of our life story. Past participants have raved about this study that takes them on a grace-filled journey toward the life God dreams for them. *Freeway* will also be a great place to connect with others if you have not found a place to connect at Athens First United Methodist Church. This study will meet on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. beginning May 20. The cost of this study is \$20. Please register online to facilitate planning and ordering materials. Register | *athensfirstumc.org/registration*

Beth Dickinson | beth@athensfirstumc.org |706-543-1442

Volunteer Opportunities at Mercy Health Center

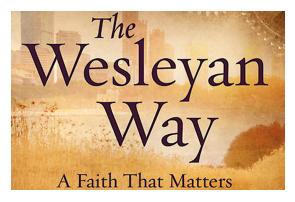
Mercy Health Center, a mission partner of Athens First United Methodist Church, is in need of volunteers! Through a community of volunteers, Mercy Health Center provides whole-person, quality health care in a Christ-centered environment to our under-served neighbors. If you are interested and can offer 3.5 hours of your time per month, please contact Virginia McKenna. The current needs are: **Tuesday evenings** | 4 additional medical providers **Wednesday evenings** | 5 additional doctors to work with medical students

Thursday evenings | 1 pharmacist Friday evenings | 2 dentists Virginia McKenna | vmckenna@msn.com | 706-338-3688

Weekday Preschool Summer Camps

AFUMC's Weekday Preschool is offering three weeks of Summer Camp: *Color My World*, May 18-22; *Mighty Machines*, June 1-5; and *All Creatures of Our God and King*, June 8-12. Camps run Monday through Friday from 8:45 a.m. to noon. The cost is \$115 per child and camp is open to children ages two on or before December 31, 2014, through children who have just completed pre-K. Sibling discounts available. Registration forms are on our webpage or may be emailed by request.

Learn more | athensfirstumc.org/weekdaypreschool Susan Brodrick | preschool@athensfirstumc.org | 706-340-5097



The Wesleyan Way | May 21

This study is a great fit for anyone interested in learning more about the Methodist church and to see faith working through love. It leads participants into a deeper, more thoughtful, and more active commitment to Christ and highlights how we are part of God's work in transforming the world. All are invited to join this encouraging and uplifing study led by Bob Dean, Mark Graham, and Rev. Beth Dickinson. *The Wesleyan Way* meets on Thursday nights beginning May 21, at 6:00 p.m. The cost of the book is \$12. Please register to facilitate ordering materials. Beth Dickinson | *beth@athensfirstumc.org* | 706-543-1442

Senior Fun Luncheon | May 28

Please reserve your seat as early as possible for the Thursday, May 28, Senior Fun Luncheon. The program will feature acclaimed Hank Huckaby, Chancellor of the University System of Georgia. Friends of Hank, those interested in higher education, and other interested church members are invited to attend. R.S.V.P. to the church office by Tuesday, May 26, at noon. Lunch on Thursday will begin at 12:30 p.m. and the cost is \$6. Call Senior Fun President Dan Maxey with any questions. Dan Maxey | 706-340-5097



Nothing but Nets | May 30

The Athens-Elberton District of the North Georgia United Methodist Church is proud to offer Nothing but Nets, a district-wide three-on-three basketball tournament benefiting Imagine No Malaria. The tournament will have male and female divisions for ages 10 through adult. Nothing but Nets will take place on Saturday, May 30, at Athens First United Methodist Church. Team registration is ongoing and will continue through the morning of the tournament. Learn more | athensfirstumc.org/nothingbutnets Rusty Wood | rusty@athensfirstumc.org | 706-543-1442



JOIN THE BEAT

Rhythm or no rhythm, we want you to join our team!

Adult and youth volunteers are still needed. Visit *athensfirstumc.org/musicandartsweek* to find out how you can help.

Early registration for children ends today!

Register by 9:00 a.m. Monday, May 11, to pay only \$30.

Contact: Sarah Lawing | sarah@athensfirstumc.org

Music & Arts Week | June 9-11

Our annual Music and Arts camp will be held June 9-11. Children currently in kindergarten through grade 4 are invited to participate as we learn ways to be hearers and doers of the Word. We will use our hands, feet, mouths, and whole bodies to praise God!

Throughout the day children will rotate through classes in drumming with song, "step" body percussion, and instrument-making along with other traditions like daily Chapel and missions times. Our clinician is James Wells from Brentwood UMC in Nashville, TN. The cost is \$30 per child (\$40 after May 10). Registration ends May 31. Learn more | *athensfirstumc.org/musicandartsweek* Sarah Lawing | *sarah@athensfirstumc.org* | 706-543-1442

Bible School by the Pool | June 22-25

Calling all current grade 5 (rising grade 6) students! We have a Bible school experience designed just for you! Join us for food, fun, and fellowship as we grow in our relationships with God and with each other. On Thursday, we will participate in a group service project and show God's love to others in our community. Bible School by the Pool will meet at Edie Lowe's house from 10:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m. on Monday through Thursday of VBS week. Leslie Rogers | *leslie@athensfirstumc.org* Learn more | *athensfirstumc.org/vbs*



Vacation Bible School | June 22-26

Join the VBS experience as we TAKE IT TO THE LIMIT during Everest Vacation Bible School, June 22 - 26. Register your children for a life changing week where we will learn that God's power will provide, comfort, and heal. Help us climb to new heights by volunteering. Each one of us can make a difference. Believe it! Register | *athensfirstumc.org/vbs* Sarah Bennett | *sarahbennettvbs@gmail.com*



Senior Fun Trips

The Senior Fun Group has two exciting trips planned for this summer. Any interested individual is invited to attend either or both of these trips. Enjoy great fellowship and comfortable transportation via charter bus. Contact Dan Maxey to sign up for these trips.

A Roman Holiday | June 2

They will tour the Martha Berry Museum, Oak Hill, and enjoy the beautiful Berry College campus. Lunch will be at the Coosa Country Club. The cost is \$60. The deadline to register for the "A Roman Holiday" trip is May 18.

Flat Rock Playhouse Trip | August 6

The group will travel north to the Flat Rock Playhouse to see the acclaimed musical *Gypsy*, followed by lunch at the delicious Bay Breeze Seafood restaurant for lunch. The cost is \$65, plus money for lunch. Dan Maxey | 706-613-1562

Mother's Day Offering

Today's Mother's Day offering benefits the residents of Wesley Woods, a nonprofit organization that provides affordable residential and healthcare services. Serving older adults of all income levels, Wesley Woods provides North Georgia with nine thriving communities and residentcentered care. Your gift offers grace and hope to older adults in need. Thank you for your generosity!

This Week

8:30 a.m.	SUNDAY, MAY 10 ACTS 16:9-15 Worship Service Sanctuary
0.50 a.m.	Preschool Nursery & Sunday School First Floor
9:45 a.m.	Worship Service sanctuary
9. 4 9 a.m.	Adult Sunday School second floor and saye bulding
	Elementary Sunday School THIRD FLOOR
	Grade 5 & 6 Sunday School: Fuel First Floor
	Youth Sunday School: First Word FIRST FLOOR
10:00 a.m.	Sack Lunch Ministry Hull Street ENTRANCE
10:00 a.m. 10:15 a.m.	
10:15 a.m. 11:00 a.m.	Senior Recognition Reception ROOM 119 Worship Service SANCTUARY
11:00 a.m.	•
	Young Professional Adult Sunday School Class ROOM 224 Newcomer Orientation HOSPITALITY SUITE
11.20	
11:30 a.m.	Children's Church ROOM 324
3:45 p.m.	Agape Choir ROOM 148
4:30 p.m.	Carillons Ringers ROOM 150
	Wesleyan Youth Choir Rehearsal ROOM 148
5:30 p.m.	Alleluia Ringers ROOM 150
	MONDAY, MAY 11 CHRONICLES 12:16-22
10:00 a.m.	United Methodist Women Circle 1 Meeting Hull DINING ROOM
1:15 p.m.	Monday Bible Study ROOM 200
5:30 p.m.	Trustees Meeting Hull Dining Room
5.50 p.m.	Trustees meeting Hold Dining Room
	TUESDAY, MAY 12 CHRONICLES 15:1-15
5:30 a.m.	Fashion Fitness GYM
12:00 p.m.	New United Methodist Women Circle 2 Meeting Hull DINING ROOM
1:00 p.m.	REACH International Leadership Meeting ROOM 226
5:30 p.m.	Fashion Fitness ROOM 119
6:00 p.m.	Girls' Volleyball League GYM
•	
	WEDNESDAY, MAY 13 MARK 8:31-38
7:00 a.m.	Fashion Fitness GYM
9:30 a.m.	Letters of Paul Wednesday Morning Bible Study HOME OF RONNIE PURVIS

- Breathe | Women's Bible Study ROOM 229
- 10:30 a.m. Summer Prayer Shawl Ministry PANERA BREAD ON ATLANTA HIGHWAY
- 5:30 p.m. Men's Prayer Group ROOM 307
- 6:00 p.m. Engage Bible Study FIRST FLOOR
- 6:30 p.m. Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal ROOM 148

Bible Study and Small Group Leader Meeting ROOM 224

THURSDAY, MAY 14 | Acts 10:44-48

- **5:30 a.m.** Fashion Fitness GYM
- 5:30 p.m. Fashion Fitness ROOM 119
- 6:00 p.m. Adult Softball BISHOP PARK Girls' Volleyball League GYM

FRIDAY, MAY 15 | JOHN 5:1-6

- 5:30 p.m. Fashion Fitness GYM
- **12:00 p.m. District Mentoring Group** ROOM 224
- 6:30 p.m. REACH International Bible Study and Dinner YOUTH AREA

SATURDAY, MAY 16 | ISAIAH 55:1-9

9:00 a.m. Children's Soccer CLARKE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

Worship Bulletin (614-280)

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Athens First United Methodist Church

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